1994 and quantity expected to be sold in the domestic market and the quantity expected to be exported;

(b) whether Government intend to export tea to Pakistan also;

(c) if so, the quantity envisaged with details ;

(d) whether it is a fact that tea industry is hit by falling exports and its low prices within the country; and

(e) if so, what steps Government have taken to avert any crisis in the industry ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) According to current indications production of tea during 1994 may reach a level of 750 million kgs. Estimated level of domestic consumption during the year would be around 580 million kgs. and exports of tea during the current calendar year are expected to be at level of around 158 million kgs.

(b) and (c) Indian tea is being exported to Pakistan also. During January to September, 1994, shipment licences for export of 1.36 million kgs. of tea to Pakistan have been issued by the Tea Board.

(d) Higher production of tea during the current year coupled with lower intake of Indian tea by importing countries, has resulted in prices of teas ruling easy at the auctions as compared to last year.

(e) In order to step up exports of Indian tea, discussions have been held with Russian authorities requesting them to source their requirements of tea from India under the debt repayment route. According to the information available, Russian authorities have allocated around US£ 50 million to various importing organisations in that country for import of Indian teas Problem regarding exports tea to Iran on account of delay in opening of Letters of Credit is exported to be resolved.

Other steps taken to boost exports of teas include promotional campaigns through Tea Board's offices abroad. It consists of (i) participation in trade fairs/exhibitions; (ii) media campaign to increase consumer awareness towards various unique characteristics of Indian tea; (iii) media campaign to popularise Indian tea through Tea Board marketing symbol; and (iv) support to various foreign brands containing Indian tea. A part of the expenditure incurred by importers for promotional campaigns is met from Tea Board budget. Tea Board have also undertaken Darjeeling and Assam logo campaign in UK to popularise classic Indian teas. Recently the Brand Promotion Scheme has been revived to give a boost to exports of value added teas.

With the improvement in exports, prices of teas at various auction centres in India are expected to improve.

Review of Laws relating to anti-dumping duties

737. DR. NAUNIHAL SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Goverment are reviewing the laws relating to anti-dumping duties in the context of the final act of Uruguay Round of multilateral trade Organisations ;

(b) if so, the details thereof ;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the cuts in Customs duty and import liberalisation has exposed the domestic industry to intense foreign competition and dumping by foreign suppliers ;

(d) if so, what steps have been taken by Government to deal with such a situation ;

(e) whether Government are also considering to reduce the time limit for levy of anti-dumping duty, from one year to six months; and

(f) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) and (b) Yes Sir. Government is reviewing the provisions in the Indian Customs Tariff Act relating to anti-dumping duties to bring Indian law in conformity with the agreement reached in the Uruguay Round Final Act.

(c) and (d) Anti-dumping actions are initiated on the complaint of the affected industry. After scrutiny of the allegations of dumping and injury, Government have imposed anti-dumping duties on import of PVC resin from Brazil, Republic of Korea, Mexico and USA and on import of Biophenol-A from Japan. Anti-dumping duty on import of Isobutyl Benzene from People's Republic of China has been imposed provisionally. Anti-dumping investigations concerning import of Trimethoxy Benzaldehyde (TMBA); Theophylline and Caffeine have been initiated.

(e) and (f) The agreement on anti-dumping in the Uruguay Round Final Act stipulate that aniti-dumping investigations shall, except in special circumstances, be concluded within one year, and in no case more than 18 months, after their initiation.

Removal of restrictions on export of agricultural commodities

738. SHRI BHUPINDER SINGH MANN : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the restrictions on export of agricultural commodities will be removed completely in the liberalised economy when the agricultural import is allowed freely and frequently; and

(b) what are the names of agricultural items which can be exported freely at present ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) and (b) All agricultural commodities are freely permitted for export except those included in the Negative List of Exports as given in Chapter XVI of the Exim Policy (RE March, 1994). Besides, certain other agricultural commodities are allowed for export without a licence but subject to specified conditions as listed in Public Notice No. 15 dated 31-3-93 appearing at Appendix XL III (i) of Handbook on Procedure (RE March 1994).

While maximising foreign exchange earnings from the agricultural sector to the benefit of the farmers, the policy of the Government is to allow the export of items of mass consumption in such a manner that it does not compromise our food security. It is with this objective in mind that Government have placed restrictions like licensing, quantitative ceilings and Minimum Export Price, on items such as pulses, cereals, oilseeds, milk, milk products and sugar.

Indian private investment in China

739. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that China has invited Indian private investment in that country; and

(b) if so, the reaction of Government and how many businessmen are expected to come forward for the private investment over there and the areas where such private investment is likely to come from ?